



U.S. Immigration
and Customs
Enforcement

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News Release

ATLANTA-BASED GANG MEMBER SENTENCED TO 13 YEARS IN FEDERAL PRISON

ICE Agents arrest felon and three other gang members during gang enforcement operation

ATLANTA, GA. – An Atlanta-based member of the violent street gang “SUREÑOS 13” (SUR-13) was sentenced last Wednesday in the Northern District of Georgia to 13-years imprisonment on charges of re-entry after deportation, alien in possession of a firearm, and conspiracy to distribute narcotics.

ICE agents in Atlanta arrested Cristo Perez-Guevara, on March 28, 2004. This was a joint investigation by ICE, Georgia Bureau of Investigations and the Cherokee County MANS Unit.

ICE has filed a detainer against Perez-Guevara, meaning that, upon the completion of his criminal sentence, he will be turned over to ICE custody and placed in immigration proceedings to be removed from the United States. Perez was previously deported from the United States on six occasions. He was previously convicted three times for Sale of Cocaine, once for Possession of Cocaine and a Theft conviction.

Also on September 28, 2005 ICE agents arrested Eliseo Lopez-Barajas, a citizen of Mexico and “Vatos Locos” gang member; as well as Ervin Yoel Dominguez, a citizen of Mexico and “Westside 13” gang member; and Omar Pinon-Solarzano, a citizen of Mexico and “Westside 13” gang member. Lopez had an outstanding warrant for Contempt of Court in Forest Park, Georgia. He will be held for deportation upon disposition of those charges. Pinon and Dominguez were in possession of false documents and were charged with Forgery and turned over to the Gwinnett County Police. Upon disposition of those charges they will be held in ICE custody pending removal proceedings.

These arrests are the latest action under “Operation Community Shield,” an ICE anti-gang initiative that targets members of violent street gangs. Since Operation Community Shield’s launch in February 2005, ICE agents have worked with their federal, state and local counterparts to arrest more than 1,390 gang members nationwide.

“ICE continues to turn up the pressure on violent criminals in order to dismantle their organizations and disrupt their operations,” said Ken Smith, Special Agent-in-Charge of the Atlanta office. “Working with our law enforcement counterparts, we are going to use every tool at our disposal to take these criminals off the streets and break the cycle of gang-related violence that is threatening the safety of our communities.

ICE kicked off Operation Community Shield in February by specifically targeting MS-13, which is one of the most violent street gangs in the country. ICE expanded the initiative in May to include all criminal street

gangs and prison gangs with foreign-born members. With the launch of this second phase, ICE's Operation Community Shield aims to ensure that gang members have no safe haven in our nation's communities. To date, ICE has arrested more than 1,390 gang members under this national initiative.

ICE uses its broad immigration authorities (both criminal and administrative) against gang members, as well as its customs authorities in targeting gang-related narcotics smuggling, money laundering, and in seeking the forfeiture of illegally derived assets.

Operation Community Shield involves strong partnerships and cooperation with existing federal, state, and local anti-gang efforts. Such partnerships are essential to the success of the initiative and to ensure officer safety during operations.

ICE also works through its 54 Attaché offices overseas to cooperate with foreign governments that are experiencing gang problems, particularly in Central America.

To report suspicious activity, members of the public are encouraged to call the ICE hotline at: 1-866-DHS-2ICE.

ICE

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of five integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.